



# Senate

General Assembly

February Session, 2016

**File No. 445**

Senate Bill No. 379

*Senate, April 4, 2016*

The Committee on Education reported through SEN. SLOSSBERG of the 14th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT TASK FORCE.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 5 of public act 15-108 is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 (a) There is established a task force to study and develop strategies  
4 to increase and improve the recruitment, preparation and retention of  
5 minority teachers, as defined in section 10-155l of the general statutes,  
6 in public schools in the state. Such study shall include, but need not be  
7 limited to, (1) an examination of current state-wide and school district  
8 demographics, [and] (2) a review of best practices, and (3) whether the  
9 Praxis examination, as currently administered in the state, has an effect  
10 on minority teacher recruitment.

11 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

12 (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives;

- 13       (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;
- 14       (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
15 Representatives, who shall be a member of the Black and Puerto Rican  
16 Caucus of the General Assembly;
- 17       (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;
- 18       (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
19 Representatives;
- 20       (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;
- 21       (7) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;
- 22       (8) The president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, or  
23 the president's designee;
- 24       (9) The executive director of the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs  
25 Commission, or the executive director's designee;
- 26       (10) The executive director of the African-American Affairs  
27 Commission, or the executive director's designee; and
- 28       (11) The executive director of the Commission on Children, or the  
29 executive director's designee.
- 30       (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),  
31 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member  
32 of the General Assembly.
- 33       (d) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than  
34 thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be  
35 filled by the appointing authority.
- 36       (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president  
37 pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force  
38 from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall  
39 schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not

40 later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

41 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
42 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education  
43 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

44 (g) Not later than [February 1, 2016] June 30, 2017, the task force  
45 shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint  
46 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
47 matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of  
48 section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on  
49 the date that it submits such report or [February 1, 2016] June 30, 2017,  
50 whichever is later.

51 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2016*) There is established a Minority  
52 Teacher Recruitment Policy Oversight Council within the Department  
53 of Education. The council shall hold quarterly meetings and advise, at  
54 least quarterly, the Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's  
55 designee, on ways to (1) encourage minority middle and secondary  
56 school students to attend institutions of higher education and enter  
57 teacher preparation programs, (2) recruit minority students attending  
58 institutions of higher education to enroll in teacher preparation  
59 programs and pursue teaching careers, (3) recruit and retain minority  
60 teachers in Connecticut schools, (4) recruit minority teachers from  
61 other states to teach in Connecticut schools, and (5) recruit minority  
62 professionals in other fields to enter teaching. The council shall report,  
63 annually, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
64 general statutes, on the recommendations given to the commissioner,  
65 or the commissioner's designee, pursuant to the provisions of this  
66 section, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly  
67 having cognizance of matters relating to education. For purposes of  
68 this section, "minority" means individuals whose race is defined as  
69 other than white, or whose ethnicity is defined as Hispanic or Latino  
70 by the federal Office of Management and Budget for use by the Bureau  
71 of Census of the United States Department of Commerce.

72 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2016*) Not later than January 1, 2017,

73 and annually thereafter, the Department of Education shall conduct a  
74 survey of students participating in minority teacher recruitment  
75 programs offered by regional educational service centers or at a public  
76 institution of higher education in the state. Such survey shall include  
77 questions relating to the components and effectiveness of the minority  
78 teacher recruitment program. The department shall report, annually, in  
79 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
80 on the results and findings of the survey to the joint standing  
81 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
82 relating to education.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	PA 15-108, Sec. 5
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	New section

**ED**      *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

***OFA Fiscal Note***

***State Impact:*** None

***Municipal Impact:*** None

***Explanation***

The bill, which requires the State Department of Education (SDE) to carry out several requirements regarding minority teacher recruitment, is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact, as SDE has the staff and expertise necessary to perform the duties.

***The Out Years***

***State Impact:*** None

***Municipal Impact:*** None

**OLR Bill Analysis****SB 379*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT TASK FORCE.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill:

1. extends, from February 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, the report deadline and duration of the minority teacher recruitment task force and expands its mission to include reviewing whether the Praxis exam has an impact on minority teacher recruitment in Connecticut (see BACKGROUND);
2. establishes the Minority Teacher Recruitment Policy Oversight Council ("council") within the State Department of Education (SDE); and
3. requires SDE to conduct an annual survey of students on the effectiveness of minority teacher recruitment programs in the state.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage for the task force changes and July 1, 2016 for the other provisions.

**§ 2 — MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT POLICY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL**

The bill establishes the council within SDE and requires it, at least quarterly, to meet and advise the education commissioner on a number of activities related to minority teacher recruitment. Specifically it requires the council to advise the commissioner on ways to:

1. encourage minority middle and secondary school students to

attend institutions of higher education and enter teacher preparation programs,

2. recruit minority students already attending institutions of higher education to enroll in teacher preparation programs and pursue teaching careers,
3. recruit and retain minority teachers in Connecticut schools,
4. recruit minority teachers from other states to teach in Connecticut, and
5. recruit minority professionals in other fields to enter teaching.

The council must annually report to the Education Committee on its recommendations to the commissioner. The bill does not provide a deadline for this report. For this portion of the bill, “minority” means someone whose race is defined as other than white, or whose ethnicity is defined as Hispanic or Latino by the federal Office of Management and Budget for U. S. Census use.

### **§ 3 — SURVEY OF MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS**

By January 1, 2017 and annually thereafter, the bill requires SDE to survey students participating in minority teacher recruitment programs offered by regional educational service centers or at a public institution of higher education. The survey must include questions addressing the components and effectiveness of the minority teacher recruitment program.

SDE must annually report to the Education Committee on the survey results and findings.

### **BACKGROUND**

#### ***Minority Teacher Recruitment Task Force***

PA 15-108 created an 11-member minority teacher recruitment task force to study and develop strategies to increase and improve the recruitment, preparation, and retention of minority teachers in

Connecticut public schools.

***Praxis Exams***

Receiving passing scores, as set by SDE, on certain Praxis exams is one requirement for certification as a teacher. In Connecticut most teachers must pass a general Praxis exam and a more specific subject matter exam (there are some waivers to the Praxis requirement). Praxis tests, a product of the Educational Testing Services, are used by more than 40 state education departments in teacher licensing.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea    30    Nay   2    (03/16/2016)